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Harmony and melody are natural expressions of the mind of man in its higher moods, and will remain so until he becomes another being. Rhythmical prose can no more take the place of verse, than rhythmical reading can supplant singing. Prose is no more poetry, than oratory is music. A discourse is not a song, any more than a talk on 'Change is an opera.

ART. IX. — 1. *Abstract of Massachusetts School Returns, for 1836. Prepared for the Use of the Legislature.* By JOHN P. BIGELOW, Secretary of the Commonwealth. Boston ; Dutton & Wentworth, Printers to the State. 1837. pp. 47.

2. *History of Massachusetts, for two hundred years, from 1620 to 1820.* By ALDEN BRADFORD, an Original Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and Honorary Member of the Historical Society of New York. Boston ; Hilliard, Gray, & Co. 1835. 8vo. pp. 480.

THE Abstract of Massachusetts School Returns for the last year, digested by the accurate and intelligent Secretary, agreeably to a resolve of the Legislature of the year 1826, embraces statements from 289 cities and towns, being the whole number of municipal corporations, with the exception of about twenty. They are divided into 2,517 School Districts, employing 2,154 male, and 2,816 female instructors. The schools were attended last year by 146,539 children, between four and sixteen years of age, (75,552 boys, and 70,987 girls,) and were supported by a tax levied by the towns and cities, respectively, amounting to \$391,993·96, and by voluntary contributions amounting to \$47,593·44 ; besides which, many towns (about 90,) have funds, the income of which is devoted to this object, all have their share of the \$20,000 interest of the State School Fund, and in many, the teacher derives part of his compensation from board furnished by families of the district. The additional amount paid for tuition in *private* schools and academies, is estimated at \$326,642·53, giving a total of \$726,229·93 *raised* last year in the towns reported, for the support of Common Schools, and Private Schools and Acad-

emies. The number of scholars attending these latter institutions is rated at 28,752, making the whole number of children at the public and private schools to be 175,291. Other matters of valuable information are embraced in the Abstract ; in particular, lists are affixed to the names of the towns, of books used in their schools respectively.

This common-school system, of which the government continues to take so much care, is known to most of our readers to be one of the most ancient institutions of Massachusetts. Indeed, it is only since the period of Independence, that any other schools have been known to our laws, the earliest incorporation of an establishment for instruction, below the rank of the University, being that of Phillips's Academy at Andover, in 1780. The first free school of the colony was that of Boston, where in 1635, five years from the settlement of that peninsula, the inhabitants voted in town meeting, "on the thirteenth of the second month," "that our brother Philemon Pormont shall be entreated to become schoolmaster for the teaching and nurturing of youth among us." Twelve years after, the General Court of the Commonwealth, having accomplished the very serious enterprise of founding the College, turned their attention to the sources whence its supplies of competent preparatory knowledge were to be drawn, and to the still wider exigency of competent instruction for the whole people. One of their first acts under the charter had been to order, that "forasmuch as the good education of children is of singular behoof and benefit to any commonwealth, and whereas many parents and masters are too indulgent and negligent in that kind, the selectmen of every town in the several precincts and quarters where they dwell, shall have a vigilant eye over their brethren and neighbours, to see that none of them shall suffer so much barbarism in any of their families, as not to endeavour to teach, by themselves or others, their children and apprentices, so much learning, as may enable them perfectly to read the English tongue, and knowledge of the capital laws." In 1647, being now strong enough to do better, they proceeded to enact, as follows ;

"It being one chief project of Satan to keep men from the knowledge of the Scripture, as in former times keeping them in unknown tongues, so in these latter times, by persuading from

the use of tongues, that so at least the true sense and meaning of the original might be clouded and corrupted with false glosses of deceivers; to the end *that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers* in church and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavours; —

“Sec. I. It is therefore ordered, by this Court and the authority thereof, that every township within this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of *fifty householders*, shall then forthwith appoint one within their towns to teach all such children as shall resort to him, to write and read, whose wages shall be paid, either by the parents or masters of such children, or by the inhabitants in general, by way of supply, as the major part of those that order the prudentials of the town, shall appoint; provided that those who send their children be not oppressed by paying much more, than they can have them taught for in other towns.

“Sec. II. And it is further ordered, that where any town shall increase to the number of *one hundred families* or householders, they shall set up a *Grammar School*, the master thereof being able to instruct youth, so far as they may be fitted for the University; and if any town neglect the performance hereof above one year, then every such town shall pay five pounds per annum to the next such school, till they shall perform this order.”

Thus, before the Massachusetts Colony was twenty years old, the outline of its system of universal free instruction was complete. Wherever a space had been redeemed from the forest, large enough to let in the light upon two hundred settlers, there every child had a right to demand of the public for himself, and every parent for his child, an education qualifying him to make his own way in the world, and acquit himself intelligently of his obligations as a citizen. And wherever twice that number was collected, making the back broad enough for the burden, there every child of sufficient capacity was enabled and invited to prepare himself, at the common cost, for the highest places of usefulness and dignity, which the commonwealth had to fill, or for the retired pursuits of laborious scholarship, as his taste might dictate.

The sovereign head had teemed, and Minerva was born full grown. The scheme of keeping the people free, by seasonably giving to every one of them intelligence to understand his rights and duties, never afterwards received, it did not require, any essential improvement. We wish we could

but say as much, as that it had uniformly been cherished in all the enlightened and bountiful spirit of its original conception. But we fear it has shared, in some degree, the fate of most human things. It is true that the manifest and vast utility of the system, as the experience of successive generations has revealed it, has not only secured it against any danger of abandonment, but made it one of the most prominent objects of reverence and pride to the people of the Commonwealth. Still we cannot but think, that, if nothing of the comprehensiveness of view, and enthusiasm of purpose, which attended its origin, had been abated, improvements in the details would have been adopted, corresponding to the different wants of different times, such as would now have left us less to desire. Massachusetts has not been false to this best legacy of her founders. We would not so libel her fair fame as to hint it. But if her people in recent times, careful to keep up substantially the institutions of their fathers, have not been so careful to imitate their fathers' conscientiousness and zeal, it is certainly no new thing that the trustee should be found less busy and hearty than the giver.

At all events, we suppose that no one will dispute us, when we express our conviction, that in proportion to the increased resources of the time, we bear a vastly less pecuniary burden for this great public object, than our predecessors voluntarily assumed, when before them it was a thing unheard of. It is equally unquestionable, that the course of legislation has in some degree concurred with, instead of obstructing, or qualifying, the tendency of other events, to bring down the common schools from the high place which they held, relatively to the wants of society, at the time of their institution. A law, passed soon after that which we last quoted, and providing that "every town consisting of more than *five hundred* families or householders, shall set up and maintain *two* grammar schools, and two writing schools," we suppose was the last which increased the obligations of the towns in respect to common school instruction in the higher departments. An act of the first year after the government was changed by the Provincial Charter of William and Mary, confirms the previously existing legislation in respect to the two great features which have been above brought to notice, but apparently without continuing the obligation upon towns, however populous, to support more than one *grammar*, or *classical* school.

So things stood, down to the time of the Revolution. The Constitution of 1780 provided as follows :

“ Wisdom and knowledge, as well as virtue, diffused generally among the body of the people, being necessary for the perpetuation of their rights and liberties, and as these depend on spreading the opportunities and advantages of education in the various parts of the country, and among the different orders of the people, it shall be the duty of legislatures and magistrates, in all future periods of this Commonwealth, to cherish the interests of literature and the sciences, and all seminaries of them ; especially the University at Cambridge, *public schools, and grammar schools, in the towns.*”

The first legislative act respecting town schools under the Constitution, dates from the year 1789 ; and its character is partly to be explained, if not excused, on the ground of the heavy pecuniary embarrassments of the time. Towns of fifty families were now required to support a reading and writing-school half the year only, instead of constantly, as before, the latter duty being now imposed on towns of a hundred families ; and a population of two hundred families, instead of one hundred, as formerly, was made necessary to create an obligation for the support of a *grammar*, or classical school. The practice, however, by no means followed, with equal step, the laxness of the law. Such was the value generally attached to a good education, and such the sense of the importance of general information to the general well-being, that the towns continued to tax themselves to an amount much exceeding, in the aggregate, the exactions of the law ; in many instances making appropriations twice as great as were requisite to meet their legal liabilities. And, in fact, as to the liberality which has been shown in the support of the secondary class of schools, (as distinguished from the classical,) there has been all along much more reason for satisfaction than complaint.

The city of Boston, for instance, might satisfy the law by levying an annual tax of \$3000 or \$4000 for the support of schools. It however raised last year no less than \$88,000 for the purpose ; and this, of course, in the spot of the Commonwealth, where the best and most numerously attended private institutions are collected.* With this money, it maintained eighty-eight schools, open to all children of the proper age. Seventy-

* The average number of pupils at private schools is 4000, and the estimated cost of their instruction \$100,000. — *Secretary's Report*, p. 2.

four of them are what are called Primary Schools, attended each by an average of from thirty to fifty children, from four to seven years of age. The establishments of next highest rank are the English Grammar Schools, for boys from seven to fourteen, and girls from seven to sixteen years old. "In these schools," — we extract from "Regulations of the School Committee of Boston, adopted May, 1836," —

"are taught the common branches of an English education. In the several buildings where the arrangement is complete, there are two large halls occupied by two departments, one of which is for a grammar school, and the other for a writing school. The scholars are organized in two divisions. While one division attends to grammar, the other attends to writing; exchanging half daily. In the grammar department, the pupils are taught chiefly, spelling, reading, English grammar, and geography; in the writing department, they are taught writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping."

These schools are attended respectively by a number of pupils not varying far from two hundred and fifty of each sex. For the instruction of the boys, each department has a master and an usher; and for that of the girls, a master and three female assistants.

There are two public schools in Boston of a higher order, the English High School and the Latin Grammar School. Each of these institutions has a master, a sub-master, and so many assistants as to give one instructor to every thirty-five pupils. The English High School

"was instituted in 1821, with the design of furnishing the young men of this city, who are not intended for a collegiate course of study, and who have enjoyed the usual advantages of the other public schools, with the means of completing a good English education, to fit them for active life, or qualify them for eminence in private or public stations. Here is given instruction in the elements of mathematics and natural philosophy, with their application to the sciences and the arts, in grammar, rhetoric, and belles lettres, in moral philosophy, in history natural and civil, and in the French language. This institution is furnished with a valuable mathematical and philosophical apparatus, for the purpose of experiment and illustration." — *Ibid.*, p. 17.

Of the Latin Grammar School, we shall be sustained by those acquainted with the facts in saying, that, for a great part, at least, of the last quarter of a century, its pupils, offered for

admission at the University, were found, on the whole, better fitted, than an equal number from any other place of instruction, public or private. It has been, in short, the best school in the country. The richest man could not buy for his son a better preparatory education, than here the poorest man's son could have for nothing. This is as it should be. This fills out, for one instance, the magnificent idea of the founders of our system of *Universal Free Education*.

We have implied, however, that this, though not a single, is a rare instance, and that the grammar schools, as might have been anticipated, have not fared nearly so well at the hands of the public, as those where only the English branches are taught. In fact, whatever of law survives upon the subject, goes only to support them in a small number of the most populous towns, which do not need State legislation to enforce the provision; the act of February, 1824, having released from the obligation all towns of less than five thousand inhabitants.*

We always regret and wonder to hear it said, that the Academies, which have sprung up during the present century, in such numbers, have supplied the want thus created. Under the name of Academies, our readers understand us to speak of incorporated institutions, in county and other towns, governed by trustees, and generally aided, in part, — in no instance, that we know, maintained, — by public or private endowments. They do supply the want, after a manner, for the rich; though, for the most part, they compel the rich man to a measure, which if he is wise, he will often hesitate much to take, even with the prospect of such benefit as they offer; that is, to send his son away, at the most critical and impressible period of life, out of the safe and profitable circle of domestic influence. But how do they supply the want for the poor man, or the man in middling circumstances? If he can afford to spare his sons' labor, and provide them with clothes and books while they study, this is the most that he can do. He cannot afford to pay their board in another town. The privilege of having them educated on that condition is no available privilege to him.

We suppose that there is little hope of our ever getting back, in this respect, into the old path. It is obvious that the Academies, now instituted, actually stand in the way of what we would else not permit ourselves to despair of. But if

* The laws in force are digested in Revised Statutes, ch. xxiii.

we cannot express unqualified satisfaction with the present, we cannot refrain from unqualified admiration of the past. It was a scheme worthy of the founders of such a republic as this, — that of giving the poorest boy, first the means of becoming respectable and prosperous, an independent happy man and a useful citizen, and then the chance, (if he but lived where there was money enough to bear the charge,) of becoming a useful and a famous man in the highest walks of public service. Would that we had them back again, the days when the State kept the best schools, and kept them open to every one of its children ; when all “the rich and the poor met together,” under equal advantages, in fair competition, and in the knitting of ties of lasting friendship. The system gave, and what remains of it prolongs, — to use Mr. Webster’s words in the Convention of 1820, — “the time, when in the villages and farm-houses of New England, there may be undisturbed sleep within unbarred doors.” But what is gone of it, has carried along with itself a great excellence and beauty of the plan. And what was the community’s safety, and blessing, and glory, and everybody’s good, was especially the poor man’s wealth. Nothing could possibly be more opposite to the truth, than was the feeling, (which had its influence in effecting the change,) that the institutions suffered to go into disuse were institutions for the advantage of the few. It was, on the contrary, the poor man who had the precious benefit for his children, — accessible to others in some other way, but not else accessible to him ; and it was the rich who met almost all the cost.

But if such revolutions do not go backward, lamentation over them comes to nothing, while on the other hand there is the more reason for checking any tendency they may manifest to further progress, and laboring to “strengthen the things which remain.” The English, or as they are commonly called in the country, the District Schools, have in recent years been the object of particular solicitude ; and the attention of the Legislature has been repeatedly given to them, in consequence of the exertions of no one more than those of Mr. Carter of Lancaster, the present chairman of the House of Representatives’ committee on education, the same gentleman whose very valuable publications on the subject we have noticed at different times.* Without having given the attention that

* Vol. XIX. p. 448. Vol. XXIV. p. 156.

we should have done to the operations of the American Institute of Instruction, we suppose also that the exertions of that association have effected much that is profitable, in the way both of stimulating and informing the public mind on this subject. In 1834, was established the Massachusetts School Fund, in which were invested, by the act, the proceeds of the Massachusetts claim upon the General Government for military services during the last war, to the amount of \$280,000, and one half the net proceeds of the sale of Eastern lands, till the fund shall amount to \$1,000,000. The income of the fund, at present nearly \$20,000, is divided annually among the cities, towns, and districts, in proportion to the number of their children between four and sixteen years of age. As encouragement to the tax payers to make somewhat better provision than otherwise their expenditure would admit, this is useful; and will be more so, as the amount is increased. But, without undertaking to say that the fund might not advantageously be much larger than the present law contemplates, we cannot disguise our satisfaction at the existence of a principle of limitation of the fund, to an amount far below what the support of the schools requires. We hope never to see the time when, as in Connecticut, the towns shall be released from the obligation of self-taxation. The feeling on their part, that it is their own money, which maintains the schools, is, in various ways which might be specified, if they were not sufficiently apparent, altogether too valuable to be dispensed with.

The subject of a State institution for the better education of teachers of the common schools, has within the last ten years been repeatedly before the legislature; and last year the appointment of a Superintendent of Common Schools was urged upon it in a memorial from the Institute of Instruction. An act for the creation of this functionary was reported by the committee on education, but did not become a law. The Institute have again memorialized the legislature, at its present session, on "the expediency of instituting, for the special instruction of teachers, one or more seminaries, either standing independently, or in connexion with institutions already existing." But at the time when we are writing, no definitive action has been had upon the project.

For the present, we dismiss the subject of the actual condition of the common schools, with the expression of the great pleasure we have in knowing them to be as good as they

are, and of our earnest wish that they were much better, and especially that the now vanished feature of the institution were restored. Such as they are, they admirably teach some valuable lessons, which are not ostensibly comprised within their plan of instruction. It is calculated that they afford to nineteen twentieths of our population all the education which they receive. Of the other twentieth, we presume we should be within the truth, in reckoning that four fifths are indebted to them for some part of their school instruction, making ninety-nine in every hundred of our people to have been at some time their pupils. As far as habits of thought and character are concerned, the lessons which they teach may accordingly be viewed, for all practical purposes, as enforced on the whole population, since the small fraction on whom they do not directly operate, is incapable of any influence to resist that, exerted by so vast a preponderance of numbers. And thus we go on to say, that, whether these institutions teach more or less of geography, or grammar, or other things well worth the learning, there are some habits of mind and feeling of the first consequence, which they do effectually teach, and teach to all; to their own pupils directly, and to the small remnant of others through their example and influence; and among these things are *the sense of individual independence, and the sentiment of mutual respect.*

We are not sorry to have this topic brought in our way, connecting itself, as it does, with some points on which we were touching in our last number. We there had occasion to remark upon complaints, current in certain quarters respecting some supposed peculiarities of the New England character. There are others, which, from time to time, have come under our notice, and probably under that of most of our readers; and they happen to be of that kind, that if they could be substantiated, they would prove the population in question to be not only very blamable on other accounts, but to be capable of resisting, with a superhuman perversity, some of the most imperious influences under which character is formed. Till all signs fail, it may be pretty safely predicted, that, of a people circumstanced in childhood and youth like that of New England, few will be found manifesting, in later life, either the arrogance and narrowness of a caste on the one hand, or a servile deference to the opinions and wishes of associates on the other.

Aristocracy, for instance, in New England! In New England, of all places in the world, where, by the fast-coloring chemics of the common schools, the boys are all dyed in the wool with democracy; — with democracy, not in some conventional sense, which, in one or another part of the country, the word may have in this year or in that; but with the conviction and the feeling of a perfect equality among men, except so far as merit makes a difference. Aristocracy in New England! where, in the collisions and friendships and rivalries of childhood, collected in masses, not divided into ranks, the very last thing thought of is the distinction between more or less pocket-money, or a homelier or gayer dress, and the *squire's* son is no better than the day-laborer's, unless he happens to be able, which it is likely he will not, to get a longer lesson, or strike a harder blow. We are not arguing to clods, or we would take more pains to show, that, in such associations, it is the bright, and the bold, and the amiable, who will take the lead, and not the high-born, if such an element there were; and that the different experiences of later life will be incompetent to undo the discipline there applied, and quell the spirit there engendered, and make the one class craven, and the other domineering. Till we have men among us, who never were boys, or till our boys are brought up in a different manner from what now prevails, it might seem that we were tolerably safe against any discomfort arising from the overbearing spirit of an aristocracy.

But others, we from time to time are learning, are of a different mind. Thus speaks a correspondent of the New York "Knickerbocker" for last October. We give the statement from this source, both because it is the most recent, of the same description, which has happened to come in our way, and because it appears in a work of that class which undertakes and intends a true representation of current opinions of the time. The article is headed "New York and New England." Of the latter section it affirms;

"Because the emigrant from her soil is a fine character, it by no means follows that he is so at home. We hazard the assertion that New England is a land of petty aristocrats. Is any one so ignorant as to suppose the reverence for rank and title, which the Pilgrims brought from England, could be done away by the mere intervention of the Atlantic ocean? We refer not particularly to the Plymouth band, but to the early population of the East.

They had nursed, in their mother's milk, a love for show, a respect for birth; their being had been imbued with these feelings, and they insensibly taught them to their children."

Again,

"The widest distinctions in society were known at the time of our revolution, and served to hasten it on. Old habits have continued to this day; and there is throughout the States east of the Hudson, a family pride, — select circles, — upper and lower class doctrine, at war with the spirit of our institutions, and the general advancement of that section in intelligence, manners, and refinement. Consequently, we find there one class eminently distinguished for eloquence, learning, and taste, while the great body of the people are inferior, much inferior, to the general level of American character. This upper class are often too refined to attend to their political duty. They are too much immersed in letters and pleasure, too sublimated, to descend to the vulgar arena of elections. They may talk of public affairs, erect monuments to distinguished men, give of their abundance to all the showy, magnificent operations of the day, and yet do this with an exclusive spirit, and with a haughty patronage, that robs the thing of all republican odor."

Yet once more;

"That people should set themselves up as grandees, look down upon the working classes, instruct their children by example and precept to give themselves airs, and make them believe they are of a higher race than the rest of their countrymen, is shocking and disgusting in a country where merit is acknowledged to be the only path to respectability, and where poverty is felt to be no disgrace."

"Here's a coil, my masters!" The author dates from a place which we suppose is somewhere in the interior of the Empire State; and the vagueness of his terms makes it necessary to presume, that he has not had opportunity for personal observations on the state of society which they rebuke. Accordingly, we mean not the smallest disrespect to him, be he who he may, when we say, that the sort of people with whom this *persiflage* originates, are simply those who have been piqued into giving it currency, in consequence of not finding in New England that standard of social rank, on which they rely to give themselves the consideration they demand. A visiter comes thither without any apparent claims of intelligence, virtue, or refinement, but with the reputation of being

eminently "good" on 'change. If he commits himself so far as to assume any thing on this ground, he finds reason perhaps to suspect that the cold shoulder is shown him; at all events, the New England world is not accustomed to stand aghast at any such apparition, and he goes away swelling with indignation at its impenetrable aristocracy. Or, a brother of Sir Plume,

— "Of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane,"

he looks for great effects to an exhibition of himself which really reflects credit on nobody but the tailor and hair-dresser who made him. He appears in the barbaro-puritan city of the East, and if he is nothing but well-dressed, not a fan nor a heart knows a single added flutter; and the view of an aristocracy which chills even maidenly enthusiasm, is wormwood to his more enlightened spirit. Or, having been lifted as high on the shoulders of a mob, as that stature of which "the mind" is not "the measure" can reach, he falls in with such as have little awe for official dignity, except as it has been attained by merit, or been made the means of conscientious public services; and the sight of their aristocratic phlegm moves his republicanism to boisterous lamentation.

A "reverence for rank and title," "respect for birth," "family pride," "grandees" who "look down upon the working classes," in New England! "Tell that to" — the part of the crew that does not sail the ship. "Rank and title"! Everybody knows, or may know, that with us the rural squire (and not a few of them are there) is company for the governor; and the priest or the schoolmaster for either; and the hard-handed, worthy man, who built the house they meet in, for them all. They are avowedly and actually fit companions, and (if need be, as it often is,) equal opponents for each other, in the cares of public life. They are avowedly and actually fit companions at the hospitable board. "Respect for birth"! Our blood is all one stream. It makes our union, not our division. It is that which in the olden day, in times when union was never closer nor more needful, stained full many a cavalier's sabre on the other side of the water, and full many a savage tomahawk, in these western wilds; the same red, warm, honest, Puritan fluid, which has always been so shy of any place in a villain's veins, and so quick to mount when battle was to be done for principle and freedom.

“Family pride”! If inequalities of condition among us as to property, — the only thing in which a distinction could exist, — were much greater than they are, the seven generations of New England have given time for some such ups and downs, as hardly admit of any loud assertion of such a feeling on the one hand, or any very cordial toleration of it on the other. They have given some opportunity for such repetition of the wise man’s spectacle, as is apt to occur, where there are no laws of entail, to interfere with the levelling operations of nature, — “servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.” In New England, only with some checks arising from less volatile temperament, and more frugal prevailing habits, the progress and decline of family fortunes has been essentially the same as in other places, where a similar freedom for advancing and ruining one’s self has been enjoyed. The first generation has stood behind the counter. The second, retaining the habits to which it was early formed, and possessing every advantage of education, has adorned with all elegances, as well as often with all virtues, the station in which it entered upon life; the third has been apt to drive, four in hand, to the bottom of the strong-box; and the fourth, educated without method or good example, and mortified by its “false position,” has had much harder work to rise, if it were so disposed, than did the founder of the domestic dynasty. And however it may be in less permanent communities, where people “come like shadows, so depart,” hereabouts we know each other too well, and have too good memories, to favor the purposes of any who should be inclined to fall out with the ladder they rose by, even if our habits of estimating character did not lead us to respect the fortunate heir, who should chance to have nothing else to recommend him, much less than we respect the memory of the honest and capable man, who gathered for him the means to make his coxcomby conspicuous.

There is hereditary wealth in New England. But, for the most part, the rich men of its cities are those who have come to them from the country, poor, and have made their way by industry and talent, and the qualities which make it honorable to rise. In many communities, this process, however desirable else, would bring vulgarity forward into the high places of society. Here it is not so. Poor these adventurers were, when they started in life, compared with what they have made

themselves. But they did not therefore rise from the kennel. The furthest possible from it. They came from their native villages, the sons of families, who were there as good as their neighbours, and as much trained to refinement of mind and manners. Accordingly, they brought with them no danger that they would shame the prosperity they might attain. They brought with them a liberality of sentiment, which adorns their prosperity, and makes it a public benefit. The *hunks*, (we have to be indebted to English dramatic literature for the term, because, in the richest part of this country, scarcely having the thing, we have found no occasion for the name,) the *hunks* is a specimen of our motley nature, of which we know little, except by hearsay. No doubt there may possibly be, now and then, a person just wise enough to make some money, yet foolish enough to think too much of it, and too much of himself on its account. But even such a person takes care to be incommunicatively "alone in his glory," unless he is very patient of the mortification which would be sure to follow on the expression of it. "Grandees" who "instruct their children to give themselves airs, and make them believe they are of a higher race than the rest of their countrymen"! For the curiosity of the thing, we would gladly travel to any part of New England, to see one of those children of a grandee practising upon his august parent's discipline, and mark the reception it would meet. Why, nothing is more notorious than that the richest and best-named father, with all the influence of his worth, not to say of his wealth, cannot so much as keep his son on a footing in good society, if the youth is known to be a profligate. Loss of caste is the inevitable penalty. And on the other hand, how vast must be the influence of blood and guineas, when any one, who has actually been in the good society of New England, knows that he has habitually met there the distinguished male and female teacher of youth, on a perfectly equal footing with the highest of the circle; we do not say merely their honored guest, — for hospitality may be but patronage, — but exchanging with them, on perfectly equal terms, the attentions that belong to an elegant social intercourse. This is nothing to boast of. It is no more than sensible and cultivated people find to belong to their own position, and their own pleasure, as well as that of others. But the fact furnishes an awkward text for such an expounder

of national character, as the writer from whom we have just been quoting.

We hope "The Monthly Magazine" is in no danger of cooling in its love of us, since its regretted emigration. But so it is, that it has taken to goading us in a tender part of our fame. In a notice of the Address of Mr. Sprague, which we commended in our last number, it quotes that gentleman's declaration that "enthusiasm was the characteristic of our fathers," and remarks ;

"We do not think that he proves his proposition. 'Fanaticism' is the more appropriate term for a part of that feeling which impelled the Puritans to seek a home in the wilderness of the New World ; and the bigoted despotism with which they domineered over all who departed from their stern creed, and who would not consent to stand, day and night, in the strait jacket, in which they enveloped alike the feeble and the strong, should not be dignified with the name of enthusiasm.

"It was wicked, impute it to what cause we may. The tyranny, with which they were oppressed in England, was light in comparison to the relentless and unsated animosity with which they pursued the Quakers, the most harmless and kindest sect the world ever saw. These dark traits in the character of our forefathers certainly deserve not the epithet enthusiastic."

We quote this form of the charge, because we like to quote something ; and not because it is necessary, in order to show that we are not tilting against a man of straw. Anybody who was curious about this description of remarks, might find them in a great variety of publications, but particularly among those belonging to the classes in literature which have a kind of conventional liberty to use confidence, and eschew qualifications. When Lord Castlereagh had uttered himself in the House of Commons, the newspapers used to say that his Lordship had been "airing his vocabulary." It is the limited vocabulary, of which the periods quoted above are a specimen, that a certain class of writers are wont to air, when they undertake the demerits of New England. What we shall say upon the topic, will do them no good. New England bigotry is an easy phrase to remember and to write, and very many times will they yet compound it, while they "build the lofty line." The object of their disapprobation must endeavour that it may cause her as little grief as may be. We have hope of her that she will sustain no irremediable, at least no intolerable harm.

She has looked, sooner and later, on a good deal of such spilt ink, and "yet lives," as healthily as did Jeannie Deans, when she survived the seeing of the queen's majesty.

"Fanaticism is the more appropriate term for a part of that feeling, which impelled the Puritans to seek a home in the wilderness of the New World." That is partly as people think. The assertion is one of that indefiniteness, which renders it particularly difficult to confute; and at all events, it does not admit of being met, without entering into a course of discussion which does not comport with the habits of this journal. For ourselves, let us but know that we were animated by the feeling which impelled those glorious men to execute their glorious work, and anybody should be welcome to call it by any name, which might suit his notions of justice or of euphony.

"The tyranny with which they were oppressed in England, was light in comparison to the relentless and unsated animosity with which they pursued the Quakers, the most harmless and kindest sect the world ever saw." This comparison, we doubt, was instituted without a careful examination of the Star Chamber records. We incline to the opinion, that there is that in their testimony, which will not allow it to be maintained. As for the eminence of the sect of Quakers for harmlessness and kindness, among all which the world has seen, the world has seen Quakers of the beginning of the seventeenth century as well as of the beginning of the nineteenth; and they did not look alike; and if the essential guilt of persecution would be aggravated, when aimed against the quiet, patient philanthropist of the present day, it does not therefore follow that it would be attended with like aggravation, however wicked else, when the subject was the mischievous madman of two centuries ago, with whom the Massachusetts colonists had to deal. We suppose that the duty of toleration, comprehensive though it be, stops somewhere short of allowing men and women, for conscience' sake, to run, as naked as they were born, through the streets, and into the churches; or at all events, that it does not require the permitting of people to gain a name like Abraham's by sacrificing their own sons, as one of the Quakers, in 1658, was proceeding to do, when his neighbours, alarmed by the boy's cries, broke into the house in time to interfere. "The relentless and unsated animosity with which they pursued the Quakers"! We had always read, that it was the

Quakers who pursued them. It may be that the Quakers caught a Tartar in Puritan raiment, at last ; and then so much the worse for both hunter and game ; but that it was the Quaker bugle that cheered on the chase, no one can doubt who thinks that there is truth in history. Grant that it would have been better to imitate in New England the example of the Pope, or still better that of the Grand Turk, the former of whom put Fox's emissaries in one of his Hospitals of St. Luke, and the latter treated them with that ceremonious respect, which it is a Mohammedan superstition to pay to alienation of mind. Still, the course of the Massachusetts magistrates must be considered as a remarkable one, for such as were impelled to a pursuit by a relentless and unsated animosity. When the Quakers found them out, in their distant hiding-place from the storm, they contented themselves with merely sending them back by the vessels which had brought them, thinking that both might live more satisfactorily, if they lived apart. The Quakers persisted, and were sent away a second time. A third time they came. Severer penalties were then resorted to. They were such as did not affect life, but they were too harsh to carry the public opinion along with them, and recourse was again had to the experiment of removal of the offensive visitants out of the jurisdiction. It failed ; and at length, by the majority of a single voice, the assembly passed that law denouncing the punishment of death against Quakers *returned from banishment*, which has had its chief life in history, for it was repealed almost as soon as enacted. The whole contest, from first to last, in its different degrees of hardship, continued about four years, when a more humane policy possessed itself of the public councils, and the Quakers, having carried the day, or rather finding more peaceable times than suited the manifestation of their gifts, gradually disappeared from the field.

We will not repeat what, in a different connexion, we found occasion to say, in a recent number, upon this popular subject of the persecuting spirit of the founders of New England.* Nor will we dwell on the facts, of recent occurrence on the other side of the water, when the Quakers first landed here, which caused them to find the colonists in a state of most sensitive apprehension respecting the spread of fanatical

* Vol. XLII. p. 128, seq.

doctrines, which seemed to threaten the overthrow of all decency of private morals, and the dissolution of civil society, and to be particularly perilous to themselves in their yet unformed state. But we wish we could make our countrymen of other portions of the Union look a little more closely, than they have done, at some large relations of that old policy of New England, which some of them appear to think a single severe paragraph or period quite sufficient to despatch. It is a great grief and offence to them, that church membership was made a qualification for the enjoyment of the franchises of a freeman of the colony. Let them chide, if they must. But we can tell them, that they would have had to wait somewhat longer for their independence, if it had not been for this intolerant spirit of New England legislation, which gives them so much disturbance. Lord Clarendon tells us, that the Royal Commissioners, sent out in 1664, found the northern colonies already "hardened into republics." They had been a short time hardening. What hardened them so fast? Nothing more than the jealous and rigid pertinacity, with which they adhered to their theory of exclusion from political power, of all who might have used it to strangle their embryo commonwealth. It will not do to look upon the Massachusetts fathers as a set of heady zealots, careful only to have their own way in religion without regard to consequences, and that way not a very wise one. There were cool and far-sighted statesmen at the helm. King or Protector to the contrary notwithstanding, they meant to have a republic; and they had it virtually from the first, exercising with the utmost freedom all attributes of sovereignty, though avoiding all ostentation of it with the utmost address. They were not so unfit for their delicate work, as to be willing to commit power to any who would have used it to obstruct their object, or even who would not sympathize with them in hearty zeal for its accomplishment. They meant that no man, attached to the monarchy of England through attachment to its Church, (whether that should turn out to be Papal or Episcopal,) should have a particle of power to annoy them in the prosecution of their great work; and therefore if such a man came to live among them, they would have it that he should come as the subject, not as the sharer, of *their* government. Dexterity as well as nerve had a place in playing so critical a game, and little fit would they have been to win it, if they had volunteered to show

their hands to his Majesty's Privy Council. To exclude churchmen from power, and admit to it other dissenters from their own communion, would have been to deprive their act of all color, even if otherwise it would have perfectly attained their end. Taking advantage of their reputation abroad for acting under impulses, which observers, less sagacious than themselves, supposed to be the only ones that had power over their minds, they cut off indiscriminately those who did not love their creeds from all participation in the government, and were quite willing that others should be stupid enough to ascribe to a stupid bigotry of theirs, a measure, which, had it been seen to be prompted, as it was, by the profoundest policy, would have brought down on them, too soon, the hard and heavy hand of England. So they had their own way, without any one in their own midst, to mar it. So they consolidated their institutions, till, by the time when the second generation came forward, they had "hardened into republics." So they kept up and bequeathed the intense and constant spirit they had brought with them. So they stood quietly by their arms, to watch the signs of the times, and do what, from one time to another, might be needful for the keeping of the treasure they had no mind to part with. So they were ready to depose and imprison a king's governor, as they actually did in Boston, in 1688; and if matters had then gone otherwise in England, they would perhaps have antedated the Revolution by nearly a century. So they built firm the foundations of the commonwealths, which at length did the part of New England, — were that little or much, — in the War of Independence. Blot the franchise laws of the Massachusetts colonists out of history, — for the sake of getting clear of the diatribes which small wits indite upon their bigotry, let in the emissaries of Strafford and Laud into the council chambers of the New England Puritans, and we do not like to say, — for we are modest Yankees, no less than well-affectioned, — we do not like to hint how differently, by this time, the history, not only of one continent, but of the other, would have read.

As to bigotry now-a-days, there is plenty of religious narrowness all the world over, and we do not mean to say that there is drawn around New England any spell to exclude the pest. But we do say, with confidence, and not without the opportunity of some observation upon other communities, that we know no part of this country, or of any other, where differ-

ences in religious opinion do less to check the friendliness of general intercourse, or disturb the intimacies of private life. We claim for our compatriots, whether of one way of belief or another, the credit of as intelligent perceptions of the reasons on which they found their faith, as are possessed by the average of any other people ; and undoubtedly it is not the well-informed, but the ignorant sectary, by whatsoever name he may call himself, that is most likely to be exclusive and bitter. He who has respected his own mind so much as to enlighten it, will be all the more likely to respect those of others ; and whoever has examined a question to the bottom, has found occasion to look at reasons, which he is no longer surprised should have weight with others, though they do not satisfy himself. The great variety of sects among us, making a universal toleration the interest of each, is a circumstance not a little favorable to the diffusion of a spirit of mutual candor. In the general interest felt in the subject, members of the same family are often members of different religious connexions ; and fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters, will know how to believe us when we say, that the mutual exhibition of a spirit of piety, under different professions, in the domestic circle, hardly admits the indulgence of any furious passion against the mere attachment to such an abstraction, as is the creed which one disapproves. And perhaps, more than all, the universal mutual acquaintance and equality of our people in their childhood and youth, which has led us to these remarks, is absolutely and mightily hostile to any such result. You cannot pick a John Knox out of the mob of hearty, laughing boys, who sweep by you in their hot game of football, as you pass near the village school. There is not an urchin of them that has ever entertained the question,

“ Shall I give up the friend I have valued and tried,
If he kneel not before the same altar with me ? ”

A very different thing from a Saint Dominic is that sweet little girl, who sits at her needle in all good understanding with her companions, though some of the group go with their parents to worship at the old meeting-house, some to the chancelled church, and some to the Methodist tabernacle. She herself goes perhaps to the Quaker conventicle. But when Sunday comes, there is very little scowling and pouting done, as they pass each other on the way. They learn to love each other before they have learned the definition of the word *creed*, to

say nothing of the definition of the matters which creeds contain. They learn these things too, in due time, but too late for them to be dispossessed of their childish experience, and made to believe, that to think otherwise than they think, is necessarily to be knave or fool; nor do they easily fall into that delusion, even when they come forward to be prominent members, in the same circle, of the sects to which inquiry or circumstances have severally attached them. At all events, while sects in New England pursue energetically their separate objects, they are for the most part content to do this, without manifestations of mutual ill-will or disrespect; nor are individuals, connected with them respectively, prevented from being each other's bosom friends, or cordial fellow-laborers in some common cause. There are instances, no doubt, of persons, unhappily constituted, or viciously trained, presenting exceptions to these remarks; but theirs is any thing but the characteristic spirit of the region. We have, on the contrary, sometimes had occasion to witness elsewhere an acerbity of feeling connected with sectarian distinctions, and interfering with the courtesies of social intercourse, of which we never saw a solitary example in these New England States.

We started upon this course of remark by saying, that from the equal footing upon which our children in New England are bred together at the schools, there is engendered among the people a feeling of personal independence, as well as that sense of mutual respect, which is hostile to aristocratic or sectarian assumptions. That under such circumstances, the natural tendency of a boy's education would be, to make him an independently thinking and acting man, no one would question. That such is actually the result to be witnessed in the character of the mature New England mind, is a point which we cannot give up, though it seems to be questioned in some remarks, proceeding from the midst of ourselves, which have lately had extensive circulation in the Western country. They come from a very high source, but it is only, on that account, the more our duty to take notice of them. Dr. Channing, in a letter to the Editor of "*The Western Messenger*," published in last October's number of that periodical, and reprinted in a separate form, writes as follows;

"Shall I say a word of evil of this good city of Boston? Among all its virtues it does not abound in a tolerant spirit. The yoke of opinion is a heavy one, often crushing individuality

of judgment and action. A censorship, unfriendly to free exertion, is exercised over the pulpit as well as over other concerns. No city in the world is governed so little by a police, and so much by mutual inspection, and what is called public sentiment. We stand more in awe of one another than most people. Opinion is less individual, or runs more into masses, and often rules with a rod of iron. Undoubtedly opinion, when enlightened, lofty, pure, is a useful sovereign; but, in the present imperfect state of society, it has its evils, as well as benefits. It suppresses the grosser vices, rather than favors the higher virtues. It favors public order, rather than originality of thought, moral energy, and spiritual life."

Expressly, this is said only of Boston. But all the world, (that part of the world, which thinks about the matter,) thinks, and thinks truly, that Boston represents New England, in respect to the leading points of character. And a reader of the remarks quoted will consider himself still further justified, in giving them this comprehensive application, by language which he finds further on. That such was the writer's intention, we neither affirm nor deny. It is no part of our object to fix a broader or narrower meaning on the words, but to protest against a prejudice which we are sure they will be so understood as to confirm.

"All our accounts of the West make me desire to visit it. I desire to see nature under new aspects; but still more to see a new form of society. I hear of the defects of the West; but I learn that a man there feels himself to be a man; that he has a self-respect, which is not always to be found in older communities; that he speaks his mind freely; that he acts more from generous impulses, and less from selfish calculations. These are good tidings; I rejoice that the intercourse between the East and West is increasing. Both will profit. The West may learn from us the love of order, the arts which adorn and cheer life, the institutions of education and religion, which lie at the foundation of our greatness, and may give us in return the energies and virtues which belong to and distinguish a fresher state of society."

We wish, as much as those who wish it most, for a freer intercourse between different parts of these United States; and in the prodigious apparatus for rapid and easy mutual communication, which makes the subject of an earlier paper in this number of our journal, we are even fain to recognise a seasonable arrangement of that Providence, which has great

things to accomplish for the world by the continued union of this nation, — to obstruct what else would be the natural tendencies of the rapid extension of our territory, to say nothing of some other elements of mutual repulsion. And to the frank and generous character of the people of the West, we lately,* as at other times, had the satisfaction of bearing our full and cordial tribute. But as to travelling to the West, or to any other quarter of the horizon, for the sake of taking lessons in self-respect, freedom of thought or speech, or the habit of acting “more from generous impulses, and less from selfish calculations,” we are slow to believe that the descendants of the Pilgrims are yet reduced to any such necessity.

We partly agree with Dr. Channing in regretting that habit of a severe criticism of the services of the pulpit, which he specifies in connexion with what we have quoted, and by the mention of which he was led to those more comprehensive remarks. But to regard it as an indication of a prevailing intolerance of public opinion, we think would be generalizing, altogether too far, what belongs to the relations sustained by one profession. Mainly, we suppose, the fact complained of is to be viewed as a traditionary consequence of the position which the clergy occupied in our primitive times. They exerted an influence greater than that of any other class in society. The doctrine they taught was the leading subject of solicitude and inquiry ; how could it be otherwise, than that what they said should be narrowly watched, and thoroughly canvassed ? Moreover, their opinions had direct practical bearings upon the community’s movements. The annunciation of their opinions had immediate practical results. How could it be, but that, when important interests of their hearers were to be affected by views which they should take, those views should become the subject of scrutiny and discussion ?

So much for the matter of their preaching. With respect to its being made the subject of criticism in a different point of view, — that of a rhetorical exhibition, — it is to be remembered that the clergy have been the scholars of New England, through a great portion of its history. The people, for a long time, looked to them for their standard of taste in composition, and each congregation had a pride in the literary name of its pastor. Habits of this sort do not cease at once,

* Review of Butler’s History in No. XCII.

when, by a change of circumstances, the original cause becomes less operative. They are of a kind extremely likely to be transmitted, by force of the mere example of elders. If the literary merits of preaching are now discussed in New England to a degree greater than these considerations will satisfactorily explain, it is natural to refer to the fact, that, up to the present time, some of the most eminent ornaments of our literature are found among the clergy. As to any intolerance of a free expression of opinion from the pulpit, we are not aware that opinions there expressed are more exposed to sifting and comment than in other places, where the subjects of pulpit discourse command an equal interest on the hearer's part. We have thought, indeed, that a somewhat peculiar latitude was allowed in this respect. We are old enough to remember that many of the clergy, in the high political excitements of twenty and thirty years ago, gave expressions of their views, which were most offensive to a large portion of their hearers, and that few were made to suffer any inconvenience on that account. Dr. Channing alludes, in this connexion, to a prevailing distaste for extemporaneous preaching. We shall not undertake to say, that it is not carried too far, though in some cases, where that method of address has been successfully attempted, the distaste has not been found insurmountable. But we are inclined to trace it, not so much to an intolerance of rhetorical inaccuracy, — for then it would affect equally the extemporaneous efforts of the deliberative assembly and the bar, — but to an impatience of those exaggerations, into which an extemporaneous speaker on an abstract subject, is very likely to fall, in the warmth of his excitement or the exigencies of his invention. For the rest, sermon-making is a favorite form of literature among the New England people; what wonder then, that, having a taste formed on good models, they should be somewhat fastidious about it? The populace of Athens were strict critics of a play; were they subject, therefore, to a general charge of want of a tolerant spirit? did they therefore exercise “a censorship unfriendly to free exertion?”

Further; wherever great subjects are thoroughly and freely canvassed, there some conclusions are likely to be reached; that is to say, there will be eventually some strong and definite bias of public opinion. So, no doubt, it is in New England; and, for ourselves, we are fond of regarding the

phenomenon in question, as a gratifying fruit and proof of free discussion, rather than as a hurtful hindrance to it. Such a bias of public opinion is not itself intolerance ; for a community, which has opinions, and understands their grounds, like an individual in the same condition, is not only not dispossessed of its candor by its intelligence, but is all the more likely to be candid, on that account.

Let us see, however, whether intolerance is actually superinduced upon it, with its supposed result of "crushing individuality of judgment and action." The question, thus, becomes twofold. We do not know better how to try it, than by taking the case of politicians. No case can be fairer ; for, in the movements of politicians, every man feels himself to be interested, and a politician every man can reach by his vote.

Do the New England people, then, keep a Procrustes' bed for their public servants, or are they rather fond of allowing them considerable latitude, when convinced of their intelligence and honesty ? Two or three facts, by way of reply, must serve for a specimen of a variety of such, which we have not room to set down. — The war of 1812 has been the great party question of these times. One of the old parties was broken down, by taking the unlucky side in relation to it. Except by popular election, not a man can, at this day, set his foot in the federal councils, who is known to have disapproved that measure, unless he is also known to have since eaten his words. Though the voice of New England was against it, there can be no doubt that an overwhelming majority of the generation which has since come up, is, — rightly or otherwise, — of a different mind ; nor is there any more doubt, that, on that most exciting point, a politician among us may adopt the exploded doctrine, without prejudice to his prospects of advancement. The case may be the same, elsewhere ; it is enough for us, that it is so here. — The practice of Instructions to Representatives is hardly known among us as a mode of political action ; nor with all the citizen's natural jealousy of his agent, is the doctrine, sustaining that practice, by any means acquiesced in, as part of the true constitutional theory. The legislature of one of our States, a short time ago, adopting an exotic fashion, invited its Senator in Congress to obey its mandate or resign ; and it got a lesson for its pains, which it will not speedily forget. — Elsewhere there is a

habit of writing letters to candidates for public office, to exact from them pledges respecting the manner, in which they will use their possible discretion in some supposed emergency of the future. The thing has not been much more than heard of, in these eastern ends of the earth. — As to Boston particularly, let one fact have a hearing. The last incumbent of the mayoralty but one, was a gentleman of excellent qualifications for that office, and he sustained it admirably well. He was chosen to it, at a period of strong party excitement, when he was known to belong to one side on the absorbing question of national politics, and a large majority of the electors belonged to the other. We defy any one to infer the want of a tolerant spirit, from a fact like this. It is to no purpose to say, that police duties have small connexion with questions of general politics. In feverish times, it is not in this way, that partisans reason, where intolerance prevails. Intolerant party leaders are equal to harder feats than that of persuading intolerant followers, that the mere elevation of an opponent to a post of dignity and personal influence, is a desertion of the common cause.

On the other hand, supposing the intolerance of the mass to be greater, is there a disposition on the part of those on whom it would operate, to let it break them down to a pusillanimous abandonment of liberty of thought and action? This is the other part of the question. And respecting this we insist, that there are, in this same matter of political life, the most unequivocal proofs of the absence of any general disposition of the kind. Candid, tolerant, trusting, large-minded as a community may be, still a degree of *surveillance* by the citizen over the course and character of the public officer, is the proper and the necessary incident of republican administrations. For the public good, the thing ought to be; but however generously interpreted on the part whence it proceeds, such supervision involves a degree of discomfort to a man of a sensitively independent mind. As far as the conditions of humanity permit, he would prefer to be responsible only to his sense of duty and his God; at least, not to be responsible to such, as can but imperfectly understand, however respectfully they may confide in him. Accordingly, such a man will not be inordinately covetous of public office. Considerations of public duty, when they can be made apparent, will of course move him to undertake it. But as a

matter of personal ambition, he will not desire it much. And especially, all his tastes will render him averse to complying with conditions of popularity, which appear to him to be mortifications of one's self-respect. With all charity for everybody, he will be indisposed to the attentions, which the low-minded may think themselves entitled to exact from him, by their power of giving or withholding a vote. He will be impatient of being questioned, as to whether, in a given state of things, he will humor one or another prejudice, or so much as take one or another part. He has no relish even for that canvassing, by friend and foe, of his modes of thought and action, which is necessary to show the voters that he is the best man they could possibly elect.

Now it is impossible, in our view, not to trace to this jealousy of personal independence, which (with the fairest constituency,) is somewhat threatened in the relations of public life, the fact that, in all quiet times, a large portion of the best spirits of New England have preferred to devote themselves to other toils. The fact is so notorious, that one of the writers whom we have quoted above, has tortured it into a support of his charge of aristocratic pride. "The upper class," he says, (p. 514, above,) "are often too refined to attend to their political duty. They are too much immersed in letters and pleasure, too sublimated, to descend to the vulgar arena of elections." This is not so. As to voting merely, it is, to a striking degree, the habit of all conditions in New England, to repair to the elections, and give their ballots, as the lists of voters in the towns, at any election, compared with the census of the towns respectively, would show. And as to public service, among all times of moment and peril, when the best men New England possessed were wanted for that employment, we should like to see one era pointed out, when plenty of her best men were not furnished. We own it, on the other hand, to be a New England notion, (—and we dare say, it may be that of other places equally, —) that good men are intended for other uses, besides those of politics; — for politics, doubtless, but for other uses too. And we own, further, that there are New England habits and instincts, as well as principles and sentiments, adverse to the business of office-seeking. They are such as would hardly admit the introduction among us, of machinery which exists elsewhere. We find no fault with methods elsewhere

approved. Let every community choose its own. For most established and unquestioned customs, there is some good local foundation; and the custom of speaking at elections, in furtherance of one's own claims, is observed and upheld by good and honorable men, who are better judges of its effect, where it prevails, than we could pretend to be. But it has, and has had, no existence among us. Except a *soi-disant* "Orator," we could not name the person, who has ever, on New England soil, taken that step for his own elevation. And in this, and other like facts, indicating a reserve and shyness in respect to public office, we find any thing rather than a weak willingness to bow to a community's dictation, or conciliate its goodwill and good offices by any unbecoming sacrifice.

Let us tell those who will believe us, once for all, that the New England people, while they are tolerant of the various ways of acting and thinking, are rather characteristically chary of their own. They are not inclined to bear hard upon others, and they are unmanageably restive, when borne hard upon. So far from being blamably easy and compliant, they have rather, from the time of the Puritan fathers down, been marked by qualities exposing them to be charged with the opposite faults of a very "fierce democratie." To be sure of keeping straight, they have been not unapt to lean backwards. It has been extremely true of them, that the more one tried to drive them, the more they would not go.* And we commend this well-ascertained trait of their character to the

* "The people began to fear, lest, by reëlecting Winthrop, they should make way for a governor for life. They accordingly gave some indications of a design to elect another person. Upon which John Cotton, their great ecclesiastical head, then at the height of his popularity, preached a discourse to the General Court, and delivered this doctrine; 'that a magistrate ought not to be turned out, without just cause, no more than a magistrate might turn out a private man from his freehold without trial.' To show their dislike of the doctrine by the most practical of evidences, our ancestors turned out Winthrop at the very same election, and put in Dudley. The year after, they turned out Dudley, and put in Haynes. The year after, they turned out Haynes, and put in Vane." — Quincy's *Centennial Address*. p. 33.

"In 1639, there being vacancies in the board of assistants, the Governor and magistrates met, and nominated three persons 'not with intent,' as they said, 'to lead the people's choice of these, nor to divert them from any other, but only to propound for consideration, (which any freeman may do,) and so leave the people to use their liberties according to their consciences.' The result was, that the people did use their liberties according to their consciences. They chose not a man of them. So much for the first legislative caucus in our history." — *Ibid.*, p. 35.

attention of some belligerents of the newspaper press, whose course it would improve.

Upon the matter which we have been treating, Mr. Fenimore Cooper deserves to be heard. He has no partiality for New England, to bring suspicion on his evidence. On the contrary, the politics, which most characterize her modern history, he hates as heartily as if they deserved to be hated. But his impressions respecting the self-respect and individuality of her people are strikingly at variance with the view presented in the last quotation which we made.

“The effect of this diffusion of common instruction is pre-eminently apparent throughout New England, in the *self-respect*, decency, order, and *individuality* of its inhabitants. I say individuality, because, by giving ideas to a man, you impart the principles of a new existence, which supply additional motives of concern to his respectability and well-being. You are not to suppose that men become selfish by arriving nearer to a right understanding of their own natures and true interests, since all experience proves that we become humane and charitable precisely as we become conscious of our own defects, and obtain a knowledge of the means necessary to repair them. A remarkable example of this truth is to be found in New England itself. Beyond a doubt, nowhere is to be found a population so well instructed, in elementary knowledge, as the people of these six States. It is equally true, that *I have nowhere witnessed such a universality of that self-respect* which preserves men from moral degradation.” — *Notions of a Travelling Bachelor*, p. 94.

“If a union of the utmost scope to individual enterprise with the most sacred regard to the rights and feelings of the less fortunate of our species, be any evidence of an approximation to this desired condition of society, I think the inhabitant of New England has a better right to claim an elevated state of being than any other people I have ever visited. The activity of personal efforts is everywhere visible on the face of the land, in their comforts, abundance, improvements, and progressive wealth, while the effect of a humanity that approaches almost to refinement, was felt at every house I entered. Let me not be misunderstood: I can readily conceive that a European gentleman, who had not been, like myself, put on his guard, would have found numberless grounds of complaint, because he was not treated as belonging to a superior class of beings by those with whom he was compelled to hold communication. Servility forms no part of the civilization of New England, though civility be its essence. I can say with truth, that after traversing the coun-

try for near a thousand miles, in no instance did I hear or witness a rude act. Not the slightest imposition was practised, or attempted, on my purse. All my inquiries were heard with patience, and answered with extraordinary intelligence. Not a farthing was asked for divers extra services that were performed in my behalf; but, on the contrary, money offered in the way of *douceurs* was repeatedly declined, and that too with perfect modesty, as if it were unusual to receive rewards for trifles. My comforts and tastes, too, were uniformly consulted; and, although I often travelled in a portion of the country that was but little frequented, at every inn I met with neatness, abundance, and a manner in which a desire to oblige me was blended with a *singular respect for themselves*. Nor was this rare combination of advantages at all the effect of that simplicity which is the attendant of a half-civilized condition; on the contrary, I found an intelligence that surprised me at every turn, and which, in itself, gave the true character to the humanity of which I was the subject." — *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 97.

We had something further to say on this last point; but we must hasten to reward our readers' patience, by releasing it. We have not volunteered this course of remark. Self-vindication, for a general rule, is not the most dignified office. But it is forced upon us by the existence and expression of sentiments, on the part of some of our fellow-citizens of other sections of the country, which it is not good for them nor for us that they should entertain. What we have been submitting to their consideration, has been said quite as much in justice to them, as to ourselves; for we ought not be willing to have their minds abused by prejudices, which we can do any thing to dispel. For the rest, it is not they who are the objects of a groundless unfavorable opinion, that have the worst, but they who have unjustly taken it up; and though we like, as well as other people, the good opinion of our neighbours, it is a thing, which, in the last resort, we can afford to do without. Character is a better thing than reputation. If we take care enough to deserve the latter, it is likely that, in the long run, we shall have it, in all quarters where we shall think it of much account. But even if that result should fail, it would be a disappointment not absolutely beyond the power of endurance.

We have heard with sorrow and surprise, that some persons, understood to be emigrants from New England, have been known to give their countenance to calumnies circulated against her character; — surprise, we say, but it is a surprise which

a little consideration tends largely to abate. That the number of such cases is small, we feel the strongest assurance. Of the crowds, who, in obedience to their native spirit of enterprise, pour from this *officina gentium* year by year, the mass have the good sense and the good feeling, to cherish, wherever they go, among the most sacred sentiments of their souls, the reverence and gratitude which they owe to the home they have relinquished. As often as occasion presents itself, they are true enough to themselves, to be ready with a manly vindication of its character ; and they vindicate that character best by an honorable exhibition of it, in their own persons. But it would be extravagant to presume, that this will be the case with all. Among such numbers, it is to be supposed that there will be here and there one without character, — at least, without reflection, or without heart ; and that there will be others, — honest and sensible men, too, in the main, — who are yet laboring under unfortunate biases. An individual, for instance, — it is not an uncommon case, — has left his New England home in early manhood, with his fortune all to seek. His nativity was cast in a comparatively mean condition, which he did not remain long enough here to reverse. In his new sphere he rises to wealth, consequence, popularity ; what wonder, that, looking back thence on his birthplace, as the place only of his obscurity and indigence, he should have some feeling as if it had been unjust to him, unless he be discriminating enough to observe, that had he remained by his home to exercise the industry and intelligence which have elevated him, they would have yielded him there a like harvest to what he has elsewhere been gathering. That such a person should allow himself in unkind, disparaging comparisons between the scene of his brighter fortunes, and that which gave him the power to advance himself, is certainly in some degree excusable, if it is in no degree wise. — Some emigrants, it is to be apprehended there will be, of an entirely opposite character. There will be single instances of such as have gone abroad, simply on account of the bad odor they were in, at home.

“ True patriots they ; for, be it understood,
They left their country, for their country's good.”

Their representations of the society which would not tolerate them, are not likely to be of the most favorable kind ; but their representations are of less account, by reason of the less

credit they will command. — And between these two classes is yet another, of which, on manifest principles of human nature, we presume there are some few specimens, but which it is harder to reduce to any precise description. There are young persons, more or less well inclined and well principled, who are yet impressible and movable, to almost any extent, by the power of sympathy. It is not merely calculation, — it may be, much more, a mere foolish facility, — which disposes them to adopt, wherever they go, the habits of thought as well as of speech and behaviour, which they find to prevail around them. This is not characteristically a New England frailty ; the contrary, rather ; it is but one of the endlessly diversified phases of the common human nature. But among the hosts of New England emigrants, it is to be supposed that some will be found affected by it. In such cases, there will be sometimes an extraordinarily sudden and marked transformation. The Yankee youth, whom one meets in some remote city, or plantation, or wild, will be found as outrageously anti-New England, as the proselyte is warm against the principles he has forsaken, or the *nouveau riche* is inveterate against every thing which pertains to the shop. In certain visible symptoms, pertaining to the same disease, you have tolerably sure prognostics how such a person will speak of his home, before the subject has been introduced. If you remark, that whatever is peculiar in the forms of language of his new residence has been sedulously adopted, you may confidently augur that he has meant to make himself over again, merging all his Yankee identity in the process. If a dirk-hilt, or pistol handle, peeps from beneath his vest, (things which a decent man in New England would no sooner think of wearing, than he would of taking his walk with a four-pounder trailed behind him,) you may be sure that New England parsimony, aristocracy, bigotry, and the rest, will find no quarter at his hands. It will be of no use to tell him, that, whatever his new associates may think of his country, they will think none the better of him for so ready an adoption of their views concerning it. It will be all in vain, at present, to commend to his attention the universal concurrence in the truth of the homely maxim, that “it is an ill bird that defiles its own nest.” You must wait. He is not to be despaired of. He may come to his wisdom, and his sense of character, yet ; and then he will come, at the same time, to bitter humiliation and regret for the recreant nonsense

he has vented. If, in the mean while, the mother that bore him must be prejudiced by his abuse, her greatest grief, and wrong, and shame, are in the dismal spectacle of his folly.

We designed to speak further than we now can do, of Mr. Bradford's "*History of Massachusetts for Two Hundred Years*"; particularly with reference to its introduction, as a text-book, into our common schools. Besides being in form extremely convenient for that purpose, it is the work of a gentleman with whom our New England history has been the study of a life, and who, from the official relation which he long sustained, as Secretary of the Commonwealth, enjoyed peculiar advantages for its prosecution. Without saying that, in all respects, the work is all that could be desired for the purpose, we are sure, that, under the direction of competent instructors, it would render excellent service to our youth. At any rate, if this volume is not all that might be wished, let one be produced which would be. If need be, let the Commonwealth offer a prize, suitable to obtain a history for the schools, from the best mind which it can enlist in that important service. We find, in the Secretary's Abstract of School Returns for 1836, that in the schools of several towns, some history of the United States is studied, and in some Irving's "*Life of Columbus*"; while in only one, that of Scituate, have we remarked any mention of a history of Massachusetts as a text-book.* These things should be done, but the other should not be left undone. As far as public provision can effect it, Massachusetts should not suffer one of her children to leave her borders, or grow up within them, without knowing well the history, to the end of being the more imbued with the spirit, of his excellent birthplace.

* The existing laws, which we perceive we have not fully described in the beginning of this article, are as follows. Towns consisting of 50, 100, 150, or 500 families, must support one or more common schools, for terms, in every year, the aggregate of which shall be 6, 12, 18, and 24 months respectively. Towns of 500 families, in addition to their Common Schools, must support, 10 months annually, a school where instruction shall be given in the History of the United States, book-keeping, surveying, geometry, and algebra. Towns of 4000 inhabitants must have their school of this latter class under the care of a master, able to teach Latin and Greek, general history, rhetoric, and logic.